

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-16 are pending. Claim 2 is canceled.

Claims Rejection - 35 U.S.C. §102

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 and 3-16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Bronner (EP 0275749 A1).

In order for anticipation to exist, a reference must teach each and every element of a claimed invention. “The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the... claim”. *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989). Claim 1 defines a coupling for a pipe, the coupling comprising:

a housing of a relatively rigid plastics material, said housing having a bore therein;

a retainer retaining said pipe within said housing when the pipe is pushed into the housing; and

a layer of a relatively deformable material distinct from the retainer on at least a part of both an inner surface and an outer surface of said housing, wherein said layer deforms against an outside of said pipe on said inner surface to form a sealing engagement, wherein said layer provides a tapering surface on said inner surface, wherein said layer includes a part formed on said outer surface on an external ledge of said housing to provide a seal with a cooperating member, and wherein said layer is continuous between said inner and outer surfaces.

Applicant is not sure which side of the assembly shown in Figs. 1 and 3 of Bronner the Examiner references in the rejection. However, applicant submits that neither side of the Bronner assembly includes all the features of the invention as claimed in claim 1.

The left-hand side of the Bronner assembly does not show a layer of deformable material that forms a sealing engagement. This is evident because the coupling employs an O-ring 5 and an end plate 7. Further, since no layer of deformable material is present, such a layer clearly

does not extend over inner and outer surfaces of the coupling, nor is the layer continuous between the inner and outer surfaces of the housing, as recited in claim 1.

Turning to the right-hand side of the Bronner assembly, a body is shown molded onto a pipe. This is not a pipe coupling, since the body and the pipe are integrally formed. Even if this fact is ignored, this side of the Bronner assembly still fails to show the invention as claimed. Particularly, the right-hand side of the 'coupling', as shown, lacks a tapering surface and a retainer for holding the tube, as recited in claim 1. Furthermore, there is no continuous deformable layer that extends over inner and outer surfaces of the coupling, as recited in claim 1.

For at least the above reasons, claim 1 is not anticipated by Bronner. Claims 3-10 and 14-16 depend from claim 1, and are therefore not anticipated by Bronner.

Independent claims 11-13 recite features similar to those recited in claim 1. Therefore, claims 11-13 are distinguished over Bronner for at least the same reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

If a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 22-0185, under Order No. 22197-00009-US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: February 28, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

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